

OAW Announces Arrest in Seaford Animal Cruelty Case

DOVER – Officers from the Division of Public Health (DPH) Office of Animal Welfare (OAW) have made an arrest in a recent case in which 32 neglected animals were rescued from a residence in the Seaford area. Officers arrested Donald Eilander of Seaford, without incident, on Friday, Oct. 13, 2017. Eilander was arraigned on 449 charges, including felony animal cruelty, in the Justice of the Peace Court 3 in Georgetown. Eilander is currently out on bail. Bail terms are set by the court.

The arrest comes after a case of animal cruelty was discovered last week by the Office of Animal Welfare's Delaware Animal Services (DAS) unit, which enforces statewide animal control and cruelty laws. Acting on a call to the DAS dispatch line, officers responded to investigate. DAS obtained and executed a search warrant to enter the property where animal welfare officers found 43 deceased dogs and rescued another 32 animals that were alive but many were severely ill. Thirty-one dogs and one cat were taken into custody and transported by DAS officers to an emergency veterinary hospital. One dog had to be euthanized, and another has since died. The remaining 29 dogs and one cat continue to recover at Brandywine Valley SPCA (BVSPCA), the state's contracted shelter provider.

"The inhumane conditions that we found the animals in was absolutely appalling and is inexcusable," said Mark Tobin, Chief of Delaware Animal Services. "It's a miracle any of the animals survived, and we are grateful we could get there in time for those that needed help so desperately." Of the survivors, all but a few of the animals were severely emaciated and malnourished, and suffering from various other health concerns as a result of their neglect. Mostly small dog breeds, their fur was matted so badly they could not move. The

animals have since been groomed and are on a special feeding program. They will be placed for adoption once they are fully recovered and medically cleared.

A person who is deaf, hard-of-hearing, deaf-blind or speech-disabled can call the DPH phone number above by using TTY services. Dial 7-1-1 or 800-232-5460 to type your conversation to a relay operator, who reads your conversation to a hearing person at DPH. The relay operator types the hearing person's spoken words back to the TTY user. To learn more about TTY availability in Delaware, visit <http://delawarerelay.com>.

Delaware Health and Social Services is committed to improving the quality of the lives of Delaware's citizens by promoting health and well-being, fostering self-sufficiency, and protecting vulnerable populations. DPH, a division of DHSS, urges Delawareans to make healthier choices with the 5-2-1 Almost None campaign: eat 5 or more fruits and vegetables each day, have no more than 2 hours of recreational screen time each day (includes TV, computer, gaming), get 1 or more hours of physical activity each day, and drink almost no sugary beverages.